

Message Text

SECRET

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51

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
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O 261546 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2346

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T TUNIS 3658

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1 DECLASS. IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE DATE

TAGS: PFOR, IS, IT, TS, US

SUBJECT: BOURGUIBA INITIATIVE ON MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS

REF: A. TEL AVIV 4986 B. ROME 5942

1. I HAVE RENEWED REQUEST FOR MEETING WITH FONMIN MASMOUDI, WHO RETURNED TO TUNIS JUNE 24 AFTER ACCOMPANYING BOURGUIBA TO GENEVA AND THEN MAKING BRIEF VISIT TO OMAN AND ABU DHABI. ORIGINAL PURPOSE IN SEEKING THIS MEETING WAS TO CONVEY PERSONALLY TO MASMOUDI DEPARTMENT'S INITIAL REACTION TO BOURGUIBA INITIATIVE (STATE 110547). THUS FAR, I HAVE ONLY BEEN ABLE CONVEY MESSAGE INDIRECTLY THROUGH DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS SALAH LADGHAM (TUNIS 3422).

2. I WOULD EXPECT SEE MASMOUDI JUNE 27 OR 28, PROBABLY AFTER DEPARTURE OF YUGOSLAV PRESIDENT OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL DZEMAL BIJEDIC, WHO NOW ON OFFICIAL VISIT TUNIS. I EXPECT THAT MASMOUDI WILL FILL ME IN IN ANY CASE ON CURRENT GOT THINKING REGARDING MIDDLE EAST, ESPECIALLY STATUS OF BOURGUIBA'S INITIATIVE. IF DEPT WISHES, I CAN AT SAME TIME ASK HIM ABOUT ISRAELI APPROACH TO TUNIS THROUGH ITALIANS.

3. BECAUSE OF SENSITIVITY OF CONTACTS BETWEEN EMBASSY ROME AND ITALIAN FONOFF, WE HAVE NATURALLY NOT MENTIONED THIS MATTER TO ITALIAN EMBASSY HERE. WE AGREE WITH ROME THAT

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ITALIANS SHOULD BE INFORMED BEFORE WE APPROACH GOT ON THIS SUBJECT, AND -- IF ROME HAS NO OBJECTION -- WE WOULD PROPOSE DISCUSS MATTER WITH ITALIAN EMBASSY TUNIS AFTER EMBASSY ROME CONTACTS ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY.

4. IF DEPT HAS ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE THIS MATTER, OR FURTHER SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR MASMOUDI, SUGGEST THEY BE SEND BY IMMEDIATE CABLE.

RELPH

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*** Current Classification *** SECRET

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